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# THE AGRICULTURAL SITUATION.

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

ISSUED MONTHLY BY THE BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS,  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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June 1, 1925.

## A MIXED OUTLOOK

The planting season is over and this month will see the country well into haying and wheat harvest. Although spring opened up early, there has been much backward weather during the last month. It has been cold with moisture lacking in portions of the Central States, followed recently by severe general storms and most unseasonable cold waves. In general, however, progress of the season's work is probably not far from normal.

Wheat harvest is getting under way in the Southwest. From present prospects, it looks as though last year's favorable wheat situation might be somewhat reversed this season. Instead of a bumper crop in time of world shortage, we appear to have a poor yield in sight with likelihood of better crops abroad. More than half the winter wheat acreage was abandoned in Washington, Montana, Oregon, New Mexico, and Texas and nearly a quarter of the acreage in the whole country. The condition of the crop on May 1 was very poor and last month's cold weather was not reassuring. The spring wheat crop is, of course, yet to be made and may fare better. Canada is said to have planted an acreage fully as large as last year, with moisture and soil conditions excellent.

The hog market has been quiet recently. Under usual conditions, fewer hogs go to market in June than in May and this trend continues until October when the fall runs begin. Normally, the price may be expected to rise from about June 1 to late September. On the supply side, the hog market appears now to be in a position of considerable strength. Hog production last season was closely comparable with 1921. Of the estimate of about 42 million hogs to be slaughtered in the year ending next November 1, over 28 million were slaughtered in the first six months, against 21 million in the same period of 1921-22. Still the quantity of pork in storage May 1 was only about the same as in 1922. In short, the total supply of hogs and pork in sight for this year is much smaller than in any other year since the close of the war.

Any easing up of hog supplies would, presumably, not be without effect on cattle prices. One of these days the cattle industry will find itself definitely on the up-grade, following which the country will become concerned over a cattle shortage in about eight years. Such are the cycles of cattle production and prices.

In general, agriculture appears, so far, to be operated under more tolerable conditions than last year. Labor is to be had, even though high priced. Tax delinquencies are fewer this spring. Farm property is again acquiring some sale value. The better economic balance has made itself felt in the country's business. Whether this improvement represents basic readjustment or is the fruit of temporary circumstances, time will tell.

KEY REGIONS AT A GLANCE

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THE EAST - Farm work well advanced but crop germination and growth retarded by cold weather. Corn up from New Jersey southward. Potatoes being cultivated in more southern areas, planting being finished in north. Some fruit damage from frost. Prices of dairy cows tending to strengthen. General conditions not greatly different from last year.

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THE SOUTH - Whole region benefited by the rains last month. Crops generally making good progress now though condition frequently poor in the west and local eastern areas by reason of poor start. Cotton generally doing well. Truck shipments heavy from Gulf territory. Fertilizer sales increased over last year. General conditions good.

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CORN BELT - Field work well along but growth retarded by cold weather. Much corn up to only fair stands; cultivation in progress. Considerable damage by cutworms and wireworms. Winter wheat headed and looking distinctly spotty. Lamb and pig crops in good condition.

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WHEAT BELT - Harvest about to get well under way in south. Grain headed on short straw. Winter wheat crop as a whole not remarkably promising. Spring wheat generally starting well though damaged in some sections by heavy frosts. Generally speaking, the north is optimistic but the southern territory is not.

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RANGE COUNTRY - Ranges in good condition, as a whole. Lamb crop big. Shearing practically finished with good clip. Stock moving to the high ranges. Irrigation water short in Colorado and southward. Sugar beets, potatoes and main irrigated crops in good shape in north, fair in south.

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PACIFIC COAST - Crops generally doing well except in extreme south where drought has continued as handicap. Cutting wheat in north. Condition of deciduous fruits variable. Citrus trees flowering well with promise of good set of fruit. California bean acreage probably increased. General feeling on coast rather more optimistic than last year.

THE HOG PRODUCTS STORAGE SITUATION

C. L. Harlan, Livestock Statistician

Storage Holdings May 1 (Millions of Pounds)

	<u>1925</u>	<u>1924</u>	<u>1923</u>	<u>1922</u>	<u>1921</u>	<u>1917</u>	<u>1916</u>
Frozen pork	199	216	213	104	201	75	78
S. Pickled "	467	500	499	348	355	381	337
Dry Salt "	145	192	228	142	246	220	202
Lard	152	102	82	96	151	61	109
	963	1010	1022	690	953	737	726

Inspected Slaughtered Hogs, Crop Year, November to October (OO omitted)

<u>1924-25</u>	<u>1923-24</u>	<u>1922-23</u>	<u>1921-22</u>	<u>1920-21</u>	<u>1916-17</u>	<u>1915-16</u>
*42,000	52,900	51,600	40,800	39,000	37,200	42,200

The above table gives the amount of pork products and lard in storage May 1, 1925-24-23-22-21 and 1916 and 1917; also the inspected slaughter of hogs by crop year for corresponding years. While total stocks are less than in 1924 or 1923, lard holdings are much larger and are the largest for May 1 in 10 years. Frozen pork holdings on March 1, 1925, were the largest on record but were reduced during March and April until on May 1 they were smaller than in 1924 or 1923.

These storage figures are of most significance when considered with the slaughter of hogs to May 1 and the supplies of hogs to November 1, the end of the storage year. The pig survey percentages of June and December, 1924, applied to Corn Belt hog production in 1923 indicate the total production of hogs in the Corn Belt in 1924 as about the same as in 1921. The inspected slaughter of hogs from November 1, 1921, to October 31, 1922, was 40,800,000 head. The inspected slaughter from November 1, 1924, to October 31, 1925, if the pig survey indications are dependable, will be less than 42,000,000 head.

The slaughter of hogs in 1921-22, however, was much differently distributed than will be that of 1924-25. In the former period only a little more than one-half (20,990,000 out of 40,800,000) were slaughtered in the 6 months, November 1 to May 1; this year 28,062,000 were slaughtered. The slaughter in the second 6 months was 19,790,000 during the former period and will probably be less than 14,000,000 this year. The difference in storage holdings May 1, 1922, and May 1, 1925, is less than 275,000,000 pounds. This is equivalent to the product from about 1,600,000 hogs. The number of hogs for slaughter is indicated as about 6,000,000 less. Apparently the supply of pork products and hogs is much smaller than any other year since the close of the war.

AVERAGE PRICES OF FARM PRODUCTS RECEIVED BY PRODUCERS

May 15, 1925.

Actual prices received by producers at local farm markets as reported to the Division of Crop and Livestock Estimates of this Bureau. Average of reports covering the United States, weighted according to relative importance of district and State.

	5-yr. Av. Aug. 1909- July, 1914	May Av. Aug. 1909- July, 1914	May 1924	Apr. 1925	May 1925
Cotton, per lb.	¢ 12.4	12.7	28.1	23.7	23.0
Corn, per bu.	¢ 64.2	66.2	78.6	103.8	107.5
Wheat, per bu.	¢ 88.4	90.3	96.8	140.5	149.1
Hay, per ton	\$ 11.87	12.28	13.65	12.48	12.17
Potatoes, per bu.	¢ 69.7	69.5	91.3	70.5	70.6
Oats, per bu.	¢ 39.9	41.5	46.3	44.7	45.4
Beef cattle, per 100 lbs.	\$ 5.22	5.50	5.94	6.55	6.48
Hogs, per 100 lbs.	\$ 7.23	7.23	6.68	11.64	10.78
Eggs, per dozen	¢ 21.5	16.7	19.8	24.2	24.8
Butter, per lb.	¢ 25.5	24.1	38.3	39.7	39.5
Butter fat, per lb.	¢ ----	----	37.6	40.5	40.3
Wool, per lb.	¢ 17.7	17.8	37.4	40.8	36.9
Veal calves, per 100 lbs.	\$ 6.75	6.59	8.14	8.80	8.35
Lambs, per 100 lbs.	\$ 5.91	6.46	11.43	12.22	11.99
Horses	\$142.00	144.00	77.55	82.64	82.15

Grain prices recovered somewhat in May from the successive declines of the past two or three months. Wheat shows the greatest gain over April. Wheat and corn prices are substantially above a year ago, while oat prices are slightly lower. Cotton prices continued downward from this season's high point which came in March.

Livestock prices are lower than a month ago. This is largely a seasonal decline. Butter prices are holding up at a time when a seasonal decline is usually expected. All prices of livestock and livestock products are higher in May, 1925, than a year ago except wool which is slightly lower. Hog prices are 60 per cent higher than last year.

PRICE INDEXES FOR APRIL AND MAY, 1925.

Farm products figures from this Bureau; commodity groups from Bureau of Labor Statistics, (latter shown to nearest whole number.) Shows year ago, and latest available months:

Farm Products

(Prices at the farm; Aug. 1909 - July 1914 = 100.)

	<u>May</u> 1924	<u>April</u> 1925	<u>May</u> 1925	<u>Month</u> <u>Trend</u>
Cotton	227	191	185	Lower
Corn	122	162	167	Higher
Wheat	110	159	169	Higher
Hay	115	105	103	Lower
Potatoes	131	101	101	Unchanged
Beef cattle	114	126	125	Lower
Hogs	92	161	149	Lower
Eggs	92	113	115	Higher
Butter	150	156	155	Lower
Wool	210	229	207	Lower

Commodity Groups

(Wholesale Prices; 1910-1914 = 100.) 1/

	<u>Apr.</u> 1924	<u>Mar.</u> 1925	<u>Apr.</u> 1925	<u>Month</u> <u>Trend</u>
Farm products	138	161	153	Lower
Food, etc.	136	158	153	Lower
Cloths & clothing	193	194	194	Unchanged
Fuel & lighting	207	202	196	Lower
Metal & met. products	149	143	138	Lower
Bldg. materials	187	185	180	Lower
Chemicals, etc.	127	133	132	Lower
House-furnishing goods	181	170	176	Unchanged
<u>ALL COMMODITIES</u>	<u>151</u>	<u>164</u>	<u>159</u>	<u>Lower</u>

1/ Bureau of Labor Statistics index numbers converted to 1910-1914 base.

RELATIVE PURCHASING POWER

(At April 1925 Farm Prices)

Aug. 1909 - July, 1914 = 100

<u>In terms of:</u>	<u>Of a Unit of:</u>				
	<u>Cotton</u>	<u>Corn</u>	<u>Wheat</u>	<u>Hay</u>	<u>Potatoes</u>
All commodities	120	102	100	66	64
Cloths, etc.	99	84	82	54	52
Fuel, etc.	97	82	81	54	52
Metals, etc.	139	117	115	76	73
Bldg. Materials	106	90	88	59	56
House-furnishing goods	108	92	90	60	57

	<u>Beef Cattle</u>	<u>Swine</u>	<u>Eggs</u>	<u>Butter</u>	<u>Wool</u>
All commodities	79	101	71	98	144
Cloths, etc.	65	83	58	80	118
Fuel, etc.	64	82	57	79	117
Metals, etc.	91	117	82	113	166
Bldg. materials	70	90	63	87	128
House-Furnishing goods	71	91	64	88	130

The downward swing in grain, lambs and wool prices during April reduced their relative purchasing power in terms of non-agricultural prices. The index of relative purchasing power of 30 farm products consequently declined from 91 in March to 90 in April.

During May there was a slight recovery in the relative purchasing power of grains and a decline in the case of livestock, particularly in sheep and hogs due to a seasonal decline in these prices.

A slight decline of possibly a point or two in the relative purchasing power of the 30 farm products for May may be expected.

GENERAL TREND OF WAGES AND PRICES

1910 -1914 =100

<u>Year and Month</u>	<u>General Wage Level</u>	<u>Farm Wages 2 /</u>	<u>Retail Price of Food 1/</u>	<u>Wholesale Price of Food 1/</u>	<u>Wholesale Price All Commodities</u>
N.Y. factory workers					Bureau of Labor Statistics
1910	---	94	96	100	103
1911	---	98	95	96	95
1912	---	102	101	103	101
1913	---	104	103	99	102
1914 (June)	100	102	106	101	100
1915	101	103	104	104	103
1916	114	113	117	120	129
1917	129	140	151	166	180
1918	160	175	174	187	198
1919	185	204	192	205	210
1920	222	237	210	218	230
1921	203	164	158	143	150
1922	197	145	146	137	152
1923	214	166	151	143	156
1924	218	165	150	143	152
<u>1924</u>					
January	219	159	154	142	154
February	218	---	152	142	154
March	222	---	148	140	153
April	218	163	146	136	151
May	217	---	145	136	150
June	214	---	147	135	147
July	213	168	148	138	150
August	216	---	149	143	152
September	221	---	151	147	152
October	217	170	153	151	155
November	218	---	155	153	155
December	222	---	156	157	160
<u>1925</u>					
January	223	156	159	159	163
February	220	---	156	156	164
March	224	---	156	158	164
April	218	163	155	153	159

1/ Bureau of Labor Statistics index numbers converted to 1910-1914 base.

2/ Index based on both monthly and daily wages.

## NEW INDEX OF GENERAL TREND OF PRICES

On Five-Year Base, August, 1909 - July, 1914 = 100

The following table presents the new index of prices of principal groups of farm products, rather than the two groups, crops and livestock, as previously presented. These indexes are on a five-year base which is regarded as a better normal base than the one year, 1913. By coincidence, the index for "all groups" and the dairy and poultry products groups equaled 100 in 1913.

Year and Month	Index numbers of farm prices							Wholesale Prices of Non-Agri- cultural Commodi- ties 1/	Relative purchasing power of Farmer's Product 2/
	Grains	Fruits and Vegetables	Meat Ani- mals	Dairy & Poultry Products	Cotton and Cotton- seed	Unclas- sified	All Groups 30 Items		
1910	104	91	103	101	113	102	103	102	101
1911	96	106	87	95	101	103	95	96	99
1912	106	110	95	103	87	106	99	100	99
1913	92	92	108	100	97	94	100	105	95
1914	103	100	112	101	85	95	102	97	105
1915	120	83	104	99	78	95	100	101	99
1916	126	123	120	106	119	100	117	138	85
1917	217	202	173	133	187	130	176	182	97
1918	226	162	202	160	245	157	200	188	107
1919	231	189	206	182	247	162	209	199	105
1920	231	249	173	197	248	152	205	241	85
1921	112	148	108	151	101	90	116	167	69
1922	105	152	113	135	156	94	124	168	74
1923	114	136	106	147	216	109	135	171	79
1924	129	124	109	137	211	100	134	162	83
1924									
Apr.	113	128	106	126	226	98	130	164	80
May	114	132	107	123	222	94	129	162	80
June	116	146	105	123	219	95	130	159	82
July	130	142	103	122	215	101	132	158	63
Aug.	141	138	116	123	219	103	139	159	87
Sept.	140	113	115	133	175	100	132	158	83
Oct.	150	109	121	142	182	102	138	158	87
Nov.	147	108	115	150	179	106	137	160	86
Dec.	155	110	113	158	176	102	139	163	85
1925									
Jan.	172	122	123	154	182	94	146	165	88
Feb.	178	131	126	142	183	96	146	167	88
Mar.	172	138	145	134	195	94	151	165	91
Apr.	152	146	146	131	189	94	147	162	90
May	159	162	139	132	184	87	146	---	--

1/ Computed by Bureau of Labor Statistics from wholesale prices of all commodities except those from United States farms. 1910-1914 = 100. 2/ The value of a unit of the farmer's product in exchange for non-agricultural products at wholesale prices, compared with pre-war values. Obtained by dividing index of all groups (30 items) by index of wholesale prices of non-agricultural products.

THE TREND OF MOVEMENT TO MARKET

Figures show wheat, corn, hogs, cattle, sheep receipts at primary markets; butter receipts at five markets, compiled by this Bureau. All figures given to nearest thousand, that is, three ciphers omitted:

Month	WHEAT Receipts Th. bu.	CORN Receipts Th. bu.	HOGS Receipts Thousands	CATTLE Receipts Thousands	SHEEP Receipts Thousands	BUTTER Receipts Th. lbs.
1921 Total	435,606	340,908	41,040	19,764	24,168	472,011
1922 "	413,106	378,598	44,067	23,218	22,364	530,601
1923 "	386,430	271,858	55,330	23,211	22,025	549,207
1924 "	482,007	278,719	55,414	23,695	22,201	591,439
1924 Jan.	15,548	30,594	6,253	1,888	1,697	37,689
" Feb.	20,165	44,689	5,335	1,457	1,412	40,474
" Mar.	17,434	29,405	4,833	1,556	1,367	44,371
" Apr.	10,374	17,926	4,374	1,751	1,348	43,970
" May	16,039	15,988	4,321	1,890	1,344	57,462
" June	16,877	17,392	4,296	1,673	1,550	77,891
" July	39,911	18,453	4,091	1,798	1,672	78,089
" Aug.	88,461	18,841	3,196	1,934	2,005	57,624
" Sept.	81,183	22,084	3,216	2,566	3,027	47,760
" Oct.	84,858	18,877	3,990	2,737	3,295	42,220
" Nov.	58,081	15,231	4,904	2,363	1,879	30,417
" Dec.	33,076	29,239	6,604	2,083	1,605	33,471
1925 Jan.	23,247	35,820	6,105	1,869	1,467	38,118
" Feb.	18,493	20,833	4,558	1,530	1,388	35,421
" Mar.	16,925	23,868	3,528	1,860	1,504	41,027
" Apr.	10,023	9,810	3,247	1,827	1,541	42,559

As usual in April, movement of crops to market declined, this being the time of dwindling stocks on farms and when field work occupies attention.

The light movement of corn testified to the shortage of that crop last season.

Hog movement reflects the sharp curtailment in production within the past year.

COLD STORAGE SITUATION

May 1 holdings (Shows nearest million, six figures omitted:)

<u>Commodity</u>	<u>5-Year Average</u>	<u>Year Ago</u>	<u>Month Ago</u>	<u>May 1, 1935.</u>
Creamery butter, lbs.	6	9	11	4
American cheese, lbs.	16	26	28	26
Case eggs, cases	3,798*	3,563*	1,240*	4,901*
Total poultry, lbs.	53	52	109	83
Total beef, lbs.	109	78	116	96
Total pork, lbs.	841	908	830	812
Lard, lbs.	116	102	150	152
Lamb & Mutton, lbs.	7.5	2.0	2.0	1.9
Total meats, lbs.	1,033	1,064	1,042	997
Apples, bbls.	1.2	2.0	2.2	1.1

Continued, outward movement of butter, dressed poultry, and meats during April. Out movement of butter considerably heavier than average. Heavy movement of eggs into storage.

Stocks are above average in case of cheese, eggs, poultry, and lard. They are below average in case of butter, beef, pork, and lamb.

\*Thousands, or three figures, omitted.

THE TREND OF EXPORT MOVEMENT

Compiled from Department of Commerce reports by Division of Statistical Research of this Bureau.

Month	WHEAT including flour	TOBACCO (Leaf)	BACON** HAMS AND SHOULDERS	LARD	TOTAL* MEATS	COTTON# running bales
	1,000 Bushels	1,000 Pounds	1,000 Pounds	1,000 Pounds	1,000 Pounds	1,000 Bales
1923 April	10,195	40,141	68,528	85,475	77,963	260
1923 12 months	171,928	474,500	828,890	1,035,382	958,473	5,279
1924 January	12,143	47,579	79,067	132,758	90,430	547
" February	10,019	38,414	81,108	99,910	90,462	482
" March	9,374	61,172	66,695	100,726	74,464	332
" April	8,416	59,019	57,546	73,307	64,474	321
" May	7,206	39,660	45,584	62,648	51,427	326
" June	10,257	52,614	44,145	59,475	49,807	231
" July	7,600	32,520	53,769	86,788	60,406	211
" August	21,106	33,410	52,367	75,937	60,180	278
" September	39,244	37,245	43,117	65,810	50,088	737
" October	53,463	56,227	45,365	60,813	52,820	947
" November	35,102	44,229	35,430	49,120	42,395	1,307
" December	24,326	44,168	33,788	76,803	43,114	1,076
1924 12 months	238,256	546,257	637,980	944,095	730,067	6,796
1925 January	12,928	35,446	56,169	78,440	65,705	1,076
" February	11,612	23,806	48,041	60,363	55,438	812
" March	16,202	32,475	53,853	63,281	62,016	740
" April	12,721	30,850	33,413	44,447	39,303	473

April exports of wheat and cotton still considerably above same month last year. Tobacco still about half. Pork exports are only a little over half those of same month last year.

The export situation continues stimulating in respect to prices of our wheat and cotton but is a fast diminishing stimulus in the case of pork prices.

\* Includes fresh, canned and pickled beef, bacon, hams and shoulders; fresh, canned, and pickled pork; mutton and lamb.

# Includes linters.

\*\* Includes Cumberland and Wiltshire sides.

GENERAL BUSINESS INDICATORS  
RELATED TO AGRICULTURE

	1924 Apr.	1925 Mar.	1925 Apr.	Month's Trend
<b>PRODUCTION</b>				
Pig iron daily (Thou. tons)	108	112	109	Decrease
Bituminous coal (Millions tons)	30	38	34	Decrease
Automobiles shipped (Thou. carloads)	48	51	54	Increase
<b>CONSUMPTION</b>				
Cotton by mills (Thou. bales)	479	583	597	Increase
Unfilled orders Steel Corp. (Thou. T.)	4,208	4,864	4,447	Decrease
Building contracts (Millions dollars)	426	430	496	Increase
Hogs slaughtered (Thousands)	2,809	2,285	2,039	Decrease
Cattle      "	1,108	1,179	1,163	Decrease
Sheep      "	726	836	833	Decrease
<b>MOVEMENTS</b>				
Bank clearings (N.Y.) (Billions dollars)	20	23	23	Same
Car loadings (Thousands)	3,499	4,558	3,722	Decrease
Mail order sales (Millions dollars)	34	36	36	Same
Men employed, N. Y. State Factories (Thou.)	524	511	502	Decrease
Av. price 25 indus. stocks (Dollars)	107	137	135	Decrease
Interest rate (4-6 mo. paper, N. Y.)	4.63	3.94	3.95	Increase
Retail Food Price Index (Dept. Labor)*	141	151	151	Same
Wholesale Price Index (Dept. Labor)*	137	159	154	Lower

Business continues on a plan of prosperity. The steel industry showed some recession in April and car loadings fell off somewhat. But, in general, trade is active, employment full, wages strongly sustained. Interest rates are low. The stock market is again strong. The cities are having another good summer. That this condition can continue indefinitely would seem to presuppose a remarkably sustained demand for building, automobiles, railway equipment and the like.

Wages of farm labor have reached a level considerably above the 1921 level in the East, but have not advanced much in regions remote from industrial centers. That is part of the story of the one-sided prosperity of 1922-23-24.

Division of Dairy and Poultry Products, B. A. E.

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Taking stock of current conditions as the new season of dairy production is getting under way reveals a situation which is of more than passing interest. In doing this, it is found that the past season closed with stocks of butter in storage at a figure practically as low as at any time during the past five years, this occurring despite the record high level which was reached on September 1 of last year. Total holdings of butter in cold storage on May 1 were down to 3,700,000 pounds, which was 5 million pounds less than last year on the same date and 3 million pounds below the May 1 five-year average. So far as influence is concerned, a carryover of but 3 million pounds, if of any significance at all, may be regarded as a supporting factor rather than the opposite. The new into-storage movement has already started in a small way, and so far as may be judged this began about the same time as last year, namely, the middle of May. It is to be noted, however, that the increase is occurring much slower than in 1924, which taken together with the lower starting point, indicates the probability of a June 1 storage report which will also reveal a considerable shortage under last year.

The production situation is perhaps the most important condition to take stock of at this time. As already noted, the new season has opened. The appearance of full-grass butter and cheese on distributing markets evidences the fact that cows are on pastures in some sections. It appears that butter production is running materially heavier during the present month (May) than a year ago, although taking the calendar year as a whole, there still remains a decrease of around 4 per cent. Cheese production is also apparently making gains which should place it at about the same as last year's production, but which, as was pointed out last month, compares with previous year's increases running as high as 8 per cent. Condensed milk production is doubtless being influenced to some extent by favorable butter and cheese markets, and some manufacturers have taken advantage of the relatively high prices which have prevailed on butter and cheese, diverting their own milk into these products, while others have held down their production as a result of failing to meet the competition of creameries and cheese factories. Like cheese, the volume of output of condenseries is not much different than last year when the whole calendar year is considered. Taking the month of April alone, available information suggests a decrease of some 6 per cent. Stocks held by condensed and evaporated milk manufacturers are again increasing, which, however, may not be cause for concern in view of what has just been said. On May 1 total stocks were almost equal to those of a year ago, while reports for each succeeding month since last October have revealed heavy reductions as compared with the 12 months previous.

When it comes to prices, it may be said that they have held at levels which many of the trade neither anticipated nor expected could be maintained. There have been and still are differences of opinion as to whether existing levels are safe from the standpoint of storing risks. Butter prices continue to be about 5 cents higher than a year ago. Cheese prices are about 4 cents higher, and the tendency has actually been upward during most of May. Despite the sentiment which persists that prices are too high, the production outlook and the fairly good movement of current receipts at markets are factors which have prevented declines.

DAIRY SITUATION

(Thousand pounds, i.e. 000 omitted)  
Stocks on hand - May 1 - United States

	In Cold Storage		In Manufacturers' Hands		
	Butter	Cheese	Cond. & Evap.	Milk	Milk Powder (Inc. skim)
1925	3,744	39,039		140,324	5,833
1924	8,913	40,235		142,838	12,643
Change	- 5,169	- 1,196		- 2,514	- 6,810
Per cent of change	- 58.0	- 3.0		- 1.8	- 53.9
5 yr. av.	- 66.9	- 33.3		--	--

Receipts of Butter and Cheese - Jan. 1, to April 30

	Butter at Four Principal Markets	American Cheese Wisconsin Markets	April Butter Receipts
1925	148,479	71,330	39,771
1924	158,688	73,354	41,358
Change	- 10,209	- 2,024	- 1,587
Per cent of change	- 6.4	- 2.8	- 3.8

Net Imports and Exports - April

	Butter	Cheese	Cond. and Evap. Milk	Milk Powder (1)
1925	359 Im.	3,754 Im.	12,211 Ex.	157 Im.
1924	2,079 Im.	6,287 Im.	14,720 Ex.	91 Ex.
Change	- 1,720 Im.	- 2,533 Im.	- 2,509 Ex.	248

BUTTER SUMMARY

(1) Indicates skim milk powder.

	1925	1924	1925 Change	% Change
In storage Jan. 1 . . . . .	65,657	30,299	+ 35,358	+ 116.7
Production, farm and factory Jan. 1 to Apr. 30	496,732	515,616	- 18,884	- 3.7
Net imports . . . . .	1,728	13,866	- 12,138	- 87.5
TOTAL . . . . .	564,117	559,781	+ 4,336	--
In Storage May 1 . . . . .	3,744	8,913	- 5,169	- 58.0

Apparent consumption

Jan. to Apr. inclusive	560,373	550,868	9,505	+ 1.7
Average per month . . . . .	140,093	137,717	2,376	+ 1.7

Apparent consumption

for April . . . . .	150,604	150,448	156	+ 0.1
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## THE POULTRY AND EGG SITUATION

Division of Dairy and Poultry Products, B. A. E.

The advent of the season of flush production found the egg market in a relatively firm position with prices ranging well above last year. During April, prices fluctuated somewhat with a tendency to work to slightly lower levels. Storage of eggs began at an earlier date this year, and in consequence storage stocks are well ahead of last year. About the first of May, however, receipts at the four markets began to show a falling off as compared to the previous year and this, together with a decrease in the rate of accumulation in the warehouses, resulted in a firmer sentiment and a gradual advance in price of about 2 cents a dozen during the first three weeks of the month.

The movement of live poultry to the eastern markets, which had been seriously interfered with during the early months of the year by the embargoes placed on account of the poultry disease situation, returned to a nearly normal volume during April. With this increase in receipts, prices worked to a definitely lower basis, this tendency being especially marked in the case of fowl. Prices of broilers also declined but this was due, in part at least, to the normal seasonal increase in the nearby supply. The price declines of April have been maintained or even extended during the first half of May.

Prices of fresh killed fowls advanced slightly during April and the market was firm on this class of poultry, largely because of light receipts. With more liberal supplies coming forward and anticipated in May, the fowl market weakened somewhat, and the advance was entirely wiped out by the middle of the month. Receipts of roasters, the last of the 1924 chicken crop, became lighter as the season advanced and had practically ceased by May 1.

Storage stocks of frozen poultry still remain burdensome in spite of a fairly good movement during April. The surplus over last year on May 1, of 30,000,000 pounds was principally in the broiler, roaster, and miscellaneous classes, fowls and turkeys having worked down fairly close to last years figures. In the face of the existing surplus, prices on frozen stock have held fairly steady, although some recessions occurred during April and May. Sentiment is far from confident, however, and with the season for marketing the new crop rapidly drawing near, it will not be surprising if further price declines materialize.

POULTRY AND EGG SITUATION.  
(Thousands, i.e. 000 omitted)  
Stocks in Storage - May 1 - United States

	Shell eggs (Cases)	Frozen eggs (Pounds)	Dressed poultry (Pounds)
1925	4,901	19,065	82,953
1924	3,563	23,707	52,068
Change	+ 1,338	- 4,642	+ 30,885
Per cent	+ 37.6	- 19.6	+ 59.3
% change from 5-yr. av.	+ 29.0	+ 14.8	+ 56.1

Imports and Exports of Poultry and Eggs - January 1, to April 30, 1925

	Imports	1925	1924	Exports	1925	1924
Shell eggs (dozens)		419	175	8,632	11,769	
Whole eggs, dried (Lbs.)		201	185)			
Whole eggs, frozen (Lbs.)		2,172	1,011)		23	259
Yolks, dried (Lbs.)		226	402)			
Yolks, frozen (Lbs.)		893	1,398)			
Egg albumen, dried (Lbs.)		480	129		-	-
Egg albumen, frozen, prepared or preserved (lbs.)		632	448		-	-
Live poultry, (Lbs.)		58	61	225	261	
Dressed poultry (Lbs.)	(2)	931	(2)	735	(1)	4,003
Canned poultry (Lbs.)		(3)		(3)	(1)	3,251
						42

(1) Includes game. (2) Includes poultry dead and prepared. (3) Not separately stated.

Receipts and Apparent Trade Output at Four Markets - Eggs (Cases)

Receipts	Net storage Movement	App. trade Output	JAN. 1 - Apr. 30		
			Receipts	Net storage Movement	App. trade Output
1925	2,479	+ 1,431	1,048	5,942	+ 1,089
1924	2,457	+ 1,082	1,375	5,636	+ 101
Change	+ 22		- 327	+ 306	- 682
Per cent	+ 0.9		- 23.8	+ 5.4	- 12.3

Receipts and Apparent Trade Output at Four Markets - Dressed Poultry (Lbs.)

Receipts	Net storage movement	App. trade output	JAN. 1 - Apr. 30		
			Receipts	Net storage movement	App. trade output
1925	13,323	- 16,799	30,122	75,338	- 32,896
1924	15,182	- 16,399	31,581	99,071	- 25,391
Change - 1,859			- 1,459	- 23,733	- 16,228
Per cent - 12.2			- 4.6	- 24.0	- 13.0

## FRUITS AND VEGETABLES IN FAIR MARKET POSITION

### Division of Fruits and Vegetables, B. A. E

The greater part of the producing country has suffered from too little moisture and too much cool weather. Yet the shipping movement is still about 10 days in advance of last season or the season preceding, and markets have been well supplied with green produce. Drought caused serious local reductions of yield. Damage by freezing was not serious, although the line of May frost extended as far south as Virginia and Mississippi. Early sections soon passed their height, leaving occasional gaps for competing shipments from other parts of the country with brisk market recoveries for potatoes, onions and cabbage.

Prices of five leading new crop lines in northern city markets at the end of May showed that potatoes, cabbage, tomatoes and strawberries were all a little lower than a year ago, but onions temporarily much higher. Comparisons with a late season are a little misleading. The Federal reports of farm prices, which included apples and stored vegetables as well as new produce, show higher figures month by month than last spring despite the early slump in potatoes and cabbage and the mid-season declines in various southern crops. Lighter acreage, reduced yield and the early movement suggest other periods of restricted supply during mid-season resulting in a generally favorable market outlook. The sustained high level of the apple market, the upturns in some lines of vegetables, and the high prices for first receipts of cantaloupes, melons, cherries and the like indicate good buying power and keen demand.

In the North, late shipping sections have shown less general desire than those of the South to cut down acreage and with some exceptions should produce about as usual if drought does not extend too far north. Potato growers in Maine and eastern Canada talked persistently of cutting down acreage although the May rise doubled the price at shipping points. On the other hand the boom in tomatoes for canning may be overdone with possibly a 20 per cent increase to nearly 400,000 acres. The market supply of tomatoes has been moderate owing to light planting and the drought, but the North and Middle West plan large crops.

Strawberry production seems likely to turn out about three-fourths of last season, owing principally to lighter planting, frost and dry weather, but the earliness of the season kept shipments active with prices about the same as last year and higher than in 1923. Cantaloupes opened the market season at high prices for first arrivals from California. The Far West will have less competition than usual from Texas, Florida and Georgia. Watermelon acreage and probable yield are so much less than in recent seasons that the market outlook is excellent.

Enough Georgia peaches are expected to fill at least 12,000 cars or more; a moderately large crop despite the light set, local hailstorms and dry weather. They were two weeks early and will continue a prominent market feature through June and July. Peach crops generally promise well in the South but suffered from frost and winter-kill in many other sections. First arrivals at northern markets sold readily at higher prices than were quoted last season. The Georgia, Carolina section, and California seem likely to ship a good sized fraction of the early and mid-season supply, but conditions in the later shipping regions are still uncertain.

THE SITUATION IN VARIOUS KEY STATES

(From Reports of State Statisticians of this Bureau)

CALIFORNIA - In comparison with this date last year, a feeling of optimism prevails throughout the agricultural sections in California. In those portions of the State lying north of the Tehachapi Mountains the rainfall has been about normal the present year, while south of the Tehachapi it is only about 50 per cent of normal. This latter condition prevailed generally throughout the State one year ago. A well distributed rainfall throughout the northern half of the State has brought about better than a normal condition of pastures and ranges, cereals, and the hay crop. In the southern half of the State, owing to lack of rainfall until late in March, conditions are considerably below normal but made wonderful improvement during the past month.

The barley and oat crop are heading nicely, and in some localities barley is tending toward ripeness with indications of an early harvest. The grain hay crop is unusually good. The seeding of rice in the Sacramento Valley counties is about two weeks later than usual but is now progressing favorably. The cotton crop is nearly all planted, and conditions were favorable to the securing of a good stand. Indications point toward an increase in the acreage of "beans other than limas" except possibly in southern California. The lima bean acreage will probably show little change from last year, but conditions are favorable for a larger production.

Conditions at the present time favor fair to good crops of peaches, pears, plums and grapes. A comparatively good flowering is reported in all the principal citrus growing districts, and conditions are favorable for a good set of fruit. The outlook for apricots, cherries and prunes is not so optimistic. It now looks like only one-half a crop of apples. Walnuts are setting a good crop, but almonds are not so promising.

The condition of all classes of livestock is excellent. Grass-fat cattle are going to market in goodly numbers, and prices are much better than the past year or two. A good lamb crop has been secured, and the movement of spring lambs to eastern markets has been greater than in any preceding year. Prices have been fair for spring lambs. Growers who did not care to ship their own stuff have received from 11 to 13 cents per pound, f.o.b. shipping point. -- E. E. Kaufman.

COLORADO - The moisture situation in Colorado is generally the reverse of what it was a year ago. Except in the northeastern quarter of the State, the precipitation has been much below normal for nearly a year, there having been but very little rain within that period. The drought has been temporarily broken by light rains during the first ten days in May, mostly around the  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch, except heavy rains amounting from 1 inch to 5 inches in the territory centering around Otero County in the central southeast. Good rains last fall and snows during the winter, and rains amounting to about 2 inches around the first of April, have made conditions very good in the northeastern quarter where about 70 per cent of the winter wheat and corn crops of the State are grown. In that section, winter wheat is in excellent condition, and prospects are good. In other portions of the State, prospects are in the balance, depending upon timely moisture during the remainder of the season.

The snowfall in the mountains is generally much below the average, and water in the streams is extremely deficient. Most ditches are without water for direct flow irrigation. Except in the northeast, reservoirs are not generally well filled. Reservoir water is being conserved as much as possible, hoping that good rains may come shortly. Irrigated and non-irrigated sections will be much alike and dependent upon rainfall as the season advances.

The planting of sugar beets is practically completed in the northern part of the State, where the acreage is about 30 per cent less than last year. Planting in the southern part of the State is still in progress, and much of the acreage of beets will have to be irrigated to bring them up. Thinning of sugar beets in a few localities has barely commenced and will not be in full swing for another two weeks. Corn planting is well under way. Early potatoes all planted, and planting of late potatoes just commencing.

Prospects for apple and pear crops are generally reported as good, with the peach crop estimated at only about 30 to 40 per cent. A large onion crop has been planted, and reports are to the effect that there will be a large increase in the acreage devoted to head lettuce. Lambing is about at the peak and shearing well under way. The fat lambs that were on feed are about all marketed. Those who marketed early are credited with having made good profits, while later marketings only about changed dollars. The financial condition of the agricultural sections is more hopeful and regarded as slightly better than a year ago. Reports indicate that there is slight surplus of labor in excess of demand for the agricultural sections. Range conditions are better than might be expected, considering the drought conditions, and all livestock are in excellent condition. There were few winter losses. Good calf and lamb crops are expected. Hay prospects a little below normal account prevailing moisture deficiency. --W. W. Putnam.

TEXAS - Rains began falling during the last days of April, continuing well into May, effectively breaking a long drought that had prevailed in many sections of the State since last June. Over the southern half of the State, however, the rains have not been general, and numerous localities are still in need of more moisture. Planting of cotton, corn, grain sorghums, and hay crops has made good progress, and the harvesting of oats has begun. The abandonment of small grain acreage from the effects of drought and winter-killing has been extremely heavy, and the shortest crop in years will be made.

With over 1½ million acres of small grains abandoned and the inability to plant the usual corn acreage through lack of timely moisture, and upwards of a million acres of new land prepared, the prospects are that cotton and the feed crops will show a relatively large increase. Cotton has been blooming in the south for several weeks, and chopping is making good progress in other districts. Some replanting was necessary in counties where rainfall was excessive, but, generally, the stands are good and the crop is growing rapidly. The first bale is expected before the middle of June. Corn is only doing fairly well outside of the northern half of the State. Sowing of a greatly increased rice acreage is practically completed, and the fields are well irrigated. Two alfalfa cuttings have already been made in some sections, and the other hay crops are making progress. Early peaches, cantaloupes and watermelons have reached the market, but carlot shipments have not begun yet.

Livestock and pastures have made a decided improvement during the month. Shearing of sheep is approaching the end. Here and there are men embarking in the cattle business or restocking their pastures. It is felt that better times are in store for this industry.

Business conditions have improved since the rains began, much of the uncertainty prevailing having given place to optimism. The banks find themselves with more cash than probably ever before, and bills payable and rediscounts are at low ebb. Farm machinery sales except in the south are holding up remarkably well. The lumber market is only fair. City building actively continues, but very few new houses are seen on the farms. -- H. H. Schutz.